

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 15731

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, IEA, GW, US

SUBJECT: FRG VIEWS ON USG PROPOSAL FOR REDUCED IMPORT
DEPENDENCE

REF: OECD PARIS 26657

1. IN COURSE OF SEPT. 16 INITIAL CALL ON ROLF GEBERTH,
NEW ECONMINISTRY DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ENERGY
POLICY WHO HAS REPLACED WALTER KITTEL, EMBOFF PROBED
FRG VIEWS ON RECENT IEA DISCUSSION (REF) RE USG
PROPOSAL FOR REDUCED IMPORT DEPENDENCE. AFTER THREE
WEEKS ON BOARD, GEBERTH ADMITTED HE HAD NOT FULLY READ
IN. HE THUS PHRASED HIS REPLIES IN TERMS MORE OF FIRST
IMPRESSIONS THAN OF FIRM FRG POLICY. WE PASS THEM ON
AS POSSIBLE WEATHERVANE FOR FRG POSITION AT SEPT. 21
GB MEETING.

2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY ENGELMANN HAD BRIEFED GEBERTH
ON SPECIAL GB MEETING SEPT. 8. ACCORDING GEBERTH,
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FRG AGREES THAT IEA MUST SET UP COLLECTIVE TARGET FOR

REDUCING ITS DEPENDENCE ON OPEC OIL. HOWEVER, FRG BELIEVES THAT EFFORT TO ALLOCATE SPECIFIC REDUCTION TARGETS TO MEMBER STATES WILL LEAD TO ENDLESS HAGGLING AND ERODE IEA CREDIBILITY. SOME ECONMIN CIRCLES FEAR THAT, IN EVENT IEA WERE TO SET SUCH INDIVIDUAL TARGETS, FRG WOULD COME UNDER TOUGHER PARLIAMENTARY PRESSURE TO COMPLY THAN WOULD ITS IEA PARTNERS. AGAIN, IEA UNITY WOULD SUFFER. CITING NO NAMES, GEBERTH SAID SOME IEA MEMBERS WILL AGREE IN GB TO ALMOST ANYTHING, IN FULL KNOWLEDGE THAT THEIR HOME FRONTS WILL NOT FOLLOW THROUGH.

3. PERSONALLY, GEBERTH DOUBTED THAT LTEA, ONCE RELEASED, WOULD WEIGH HEAVILY IN OPEC PRICE DECISIONS OR CIEC OUTCOME. HE DID NOT AGREE THAT IEA SHOULD TAKE PROMPT DECISION ON REDUCED DEPENDENCE IN ORDER TO OFFSET PROSPECTIVE LTEA PUBLICATION. RATHER, GEBERTH THOUGHT THAT ONLY MASSIVE IEA PROGRAMS TO CONSERVE ENERGY OR DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE SOURCES WOULD HAVE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON OPEC PRICE-POLITICKING. HE CONCEDED, THOUGH, THAT SUCH PROGRAMS NOT YET ON HORIZON.

4. FRG IS DEBATING COURSE WHICH ITS DELEGATES (ENGELMANN AND GEBERTH) WILL FOLLOW AT SEPT. 21 GB DISCUSSION ON REDUCED DEPENDENCE. GEBERTH SPECULATED THAT FRG WILL SUPPORT GB DECISION WHICH (1) SETS UP GROUP TARGET FOR REDUCED DEPENDENCE AND (2) INDICATES-- WITHOUT SPELLING OUT SPECIFIC PERCENTAGE OR TONNAGE REDUCTIONS--AREAS IN WHICH EACH IEA MEMBER SHOULD SEEK ENERGY SAVINGS. GEBERTH EMPHASIZED THAT FRG REGARDS LANTZKE DRAFT AS GOING TOO FAR IN DIRECTION OF USG PROPOSALS.
HILLENBRAND

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